

### **In the Claims**

Cancel claims 1-8 without prejudice. Add Claims 9-11 as follows:

1-8. (canceled).

9. (New). A method of repeated tempering of samples in a plurality of successive steps, comprising the steps of:

providing a laboratory tempering device comprising a plurality of sample receptacles arranged in a two-dimensional array formed of rows and columns, wherein the array is divided in a plurality of areas corresponding in number to the number of successive steps, each area having at least one column and being capable of producing either a temperature gradient in the direction of the column or a uniform temperature;

successively tempering the samples in the array at the respective different predetermined temperatures of the successive steps, with the gradient in each successive step being produced in a different one of the areas;

repeating the successive steps.

10. (New). A method according to claim 9, wherein the rows and columns are disposed orthogonally to each other.

11. (New). A method according to claim 10, wherein boundaries of the areas extended parallel to the direction of the temperature gradient.